



# OFFICIAL NEWS RELEASE

MISSISSIPPI FORESTRY COMMISSION

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[www.mfc.state.ms.us](http://www.mfc.state.ms.us)

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## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### One Cited for Misdemeanor Woods Arson in Lauderdale County

Meridian, MS--On January 27, 2009, one man from Lauderdale County was issued a citation for one count of misdemeanor woods arson. Robert Cook of the Shucktown Community in Lauderdale County was issued a citation following an investigation by the Mississippi Forestry Commission's fire law investigators Scott Miles and Brandon Hendry.

The fire occurred on January 22, 2009, on Sixteenth Section school trust land off Highway 495 in the Shucktown Community near the Bailey Fire Department. The Bailey Volunteer Fire Department was dispatched to the fire and contained it at less than an acre. Investigators Miles and Hendry conducted an origin and cause determination at the fire scene and collected information from a witness. The Lauderdale County Sheriff's Office also assisted in the case.

In Mississippi, the penalty for misdemeanor woods arson upon conviction shall be fined not less than \$20 nor more than \$500 or imprisoned in the county jail not more than three months, or both at the discretion of the court.

Please report any suspicious behavior concerning a woods fire by calling the Mississippi Forestry Commission's **Woods Arson Hotline at 1-800-240-5161**. Information leading to the arrest and conviction of a woods arsonist can be rewarded up to \$2,500.

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The Mississippi Forestry Commission asks that you ***THINK TWICE Before You Do Any Outdoor Burning! Don't Burn on Windy Days*** because ***Carelessness Causes Wildfires***. Check for local burn bans at [www.mfc.state.ms.us](http://www.mfc.state.ms.us)